

EDITORIAL

Seaflower Scientific Expeditions: A Decade of Knowledge and Conservation of Our Insular Caribbean***Expediciones científicas Seaflower: una década de conocimiento y conservación de nuestro Caribe insular***DOI: <https://doi.org/10.26640/22159045.2024.649>Mario Alex Cabezas Hinestroza¹

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The General Maritime Directorate (Dimar) is the Colombian maritime authority in charge of leading and coordinating government policy focused on strengthening national "maritime power". Its priorities include comprehensive maritime security, the protection of human life at sea, the promotion of maritime activities and the scientific and technological development of the nation, with sustainability as its axis, with the aim of contributing to the growth of the country.

To ensure the fulfillment of its functions and objectives, the Entity has an administrative structure that allows it to get closer to the Maritime Sector. These functions are carried out under three figures: coastal State, port State and flag State.

In addition, DIMAR has eighteen (18) regional and sectional offices called port captaincies, distributed in the country's maritime and river ports; two (2) oceanographic and hydrographic research centres (in the Caribbean and the Pacific); three (3) maritime signaling groups, located in the Caribbean, the Pacific and the Magdalena River, and three (3) regional intendancy groups located in Barranquilla, Cartagena and Buenaventura. Finally, it has fourteen (14) floating units, whose work includes the development of missions such as a platform for marine scientific research, maritime signaling, transport of equipment and support

personnel; support and assistance in marine research; positioning of navigational aids; equipment placement; assistance to offshore and onshore platforms; transportation of supplies, equipment and operating machinery; support for naval operations, peace operations and humanitarian aid; environmental control and protection; search and rescue, firefighters, and other oceanographic, hydrographic, and geological scientific research. All these activities, without a doubt, contribute jointly to the fulfillment of the vision of the Entity, which is to become by 2042, the axis that consolidates the maritime, river, coastal and insular country, contributing to the positioning of Colombia as a bioceanic power with high international incidence.

Therefore, it is of great relevance for DIMAR to disseminate how, through different guidelines, policies, projects, strategies, agreements and goals, it contributes to the maritime development of Colombia. For this reason, for the current term, it was decided to make an issue of the CIOH Scientific Bulletin, dedicated to communicating part of the findings, scientific and technological advances derived from the expeditions carried out for a decade to the Seaflower Biosphere Reserve (RBS), which have contributed significantly to the knowledge and management of this important world-class protected area.

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The Seaflower scientific expeditions represent an articulated effort between multiple national entities in favor of the generation of knowledge about RBS, which has the respect and support of the scientific and academic community of the country. Its main objective is to know and study the social, physical, biological and chemical characteristics of the archipelago of San Andrés, Providencia and Santa Catalina, in order to contribute to its preservation.

In this sense, we thank each of the researchers and peer evaluators for their dedication to academic excellence and for their valuable contribution to the enrichment of the published manuscripts.

Without further ado, we invite you to explore our publications, which seek to raise awareness and ensure a safe and sustainable future for our coasts and oceans.